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April 25, 2009

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: Jonathan E. Fielding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director and Health Officer

SUBJECT: **SWINE INFLUENZA – UPDATE #2**

In follow-up to my report of April 24, 2009, this is to provide you with an update on swine influenza.

Disease Summary

As of today, one additional case of swine influenza has been identified in California in Imperial County. This brings the California total to seven of which four are in San Diego County and three in Imperial County. With the exception of the new case which is being characterized as mildly severe, the illness has been mild, and no deaths have been reported among these cases.

No cases have been identified in Los Angeles County although it is reasonable to expect cases will be identified in the near future as a result of increased surveillance.

Elsewhere in the US, two cases, one with a history of recent travel to Mexico, have been confirmed in Kansas with illness were characterized as mild. In Texas, one mild case has been identified in the same high school as the two previously known cases. In New York City, eight probable cases have been identified among as many as 200 ill in a private school with a student body of 2,700. Illness has been characterized as mild.

Federal and State Response

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO), and Canada have been working closely with public health officials in Mexico where increased levels of respiratory disease have been reported including cases with the same swine influenza strain as the US cases. There are some reports that the Mexican cases, including deaths, have been more severe but this has not been confirmed by epidemiologic analysis nor does it match the experience of the US cases.

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CDC has not revised its travel guidance. There are no domestic or international travel restrictions, but travelers are urged to use caution and practice preventive measures to minimize transmission of respiratory viruses.

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has issued health alert information to hospitals and other health care facilities instructing providers to report influenza-like illness to local health departments.

Both CDC and CDPH are convening daily conference calls in which DPH is participating.

DPH Response

As previously reported, DPH has increased surveillance activities including alerting: hospitals and the Coroner to send isolates to the Public Health Laboratory; schools with respect to absenteeism and increased illness; and other health providers regarding increased illness.

DPH has begun distribution of educational materials reinforcing respiratory hygiene to schools and community partners, and has posted information on its website: <http://ph.lacounty.gov>

DPH has activated its emergency structure and has notified the County Office of Emergency Management, CPDH, CDC, and the County Emergency Medical Services Agency. DPH is actively monitoring the situation closely 24/7.

Lastly, DPH is identifying staff for field investigation of the initial cases likely to occur in the near future in the County, and is reviewing protocols regarding the use of the antiviral medications.

We will keep you apprised as warranted. If you have any questions or need additional information, please let me know.

JEF:lm

c: Chief Executive Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors